

The Gunnison River through the Gunnison Gorge offers a technical and remote whitewater experience for rafters, kayakers, and canoeists. Your trip can vary widely, depending on time of year and flow from dam releases and winter snowpack.

Expect high releases of 2,000 to 10,000 cubic feet per second (cfs) in late May and early June. Summer flows can range from 300 cfs in low water years to 2,000+ cfs during big water years.

At flows below 800 cfs, the Gorge is highly technical and is not recommended for rafts over 12 feet in length.

Flows over 5,000 cfs make the Gorge extremely dangerous for boating. Currents become swift and swirly, eddies disappear, and swims are very long.

Rescue is very difficult in the Gorge. If in doubt, SCOUT!

The River Map provides locations and class of rapids. Each raft must carry an extra oar or paddle, first aid kit, repair kit, and extra PFD.

Flow in Cubic Feet per Second (cfs)	Recommend Crafts	Comments
300-600	Canoes, kayaks, inflatable kayaks, and rafts 12 feet or smaller	River is less “pushy” but rapids become more technical, with exposed rocks and narrow passages. Gate Keeper Rapid should be run through left passage
600-1,000	Canoes, kayaks, inflatable kayaks, and rafts 14 feet or smaller	Best flow for less experience and intermediate rafters Challenging for intermediate kayakers
1,000-3,000	Canoes, kayaks, inflatable kayaks, and rafts 16 feet or smaller	Solid class III with some IV possible As flows approach 3,000 cfs, the river becomes “pushy.” Many rapids will wash out, while others will form.
3,000 and Over (Rare)	Canoes, kayaks, inflatable kayaks and rafts 16 feet	RECOMMENDED FOR EXPERT BOATERS ONLY Class III and IV

